

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

June 14, 2018

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Majority Leader
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Charles Schumer
Democratic Leader
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Leader McConnell and Leader Schumer:

We write to express our strong opposition to the inclusion of provisions that preempt state safety laws providing meal and rest breaks to truck drivers in legislation to reauthorize the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), fund the federal government, or any other legislative vehicle.

This is a safety issue of the utmost importance. Truck drivers work long hours, often driving hundreds of miles, and can face fatigue and exhaustion. They must be able to take adequate rest and without meal and rest breaks the number of accidents and fatalities could increase.

There are currently 21 states and U.S. territories that have adopted additional regulations requiring motor carriers to provide minimum meal and rest breaks to truck drivers. One purpose of these state laws is to keep fatigued drivers off the road by placing limits on when and for how long they may drive. In 2014, a federal appellate court upheld California's meal and rest break law against a federal preemption challenge.

These decades-old state laws protect the safety and working conditions of our nation's truck drivers and the safety of the men, women, and families that use our roads and highways every day. Enacting legislation to void state safety laws could hurt truck drivers and put public safety at risk.

In 2015, Congress wisely struck such provisions from the Fixing America's Surface Transportation (FAST) Act during conference negotiations. For several years, Congress did not support the inclusion of meal and rest break preemption provisions in any funding bills, including the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2017 and Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2018.

The Teamsters Union, safety advocates, American Association for Justice, and more than 160,000 owner-operators and professional drivers all oppose weakening a truck driver's ability to take necessary breaks. Any attempt to overturn state meal and rest break laws undermines a state's right to protect the safety of the public and regulate its labor force.

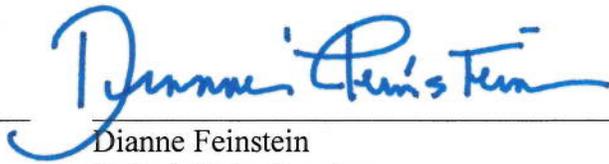
We urge you to again protect workers' rights and states' power to protect their citizens by not including meal and rest break riders in the FAA reauthorization, any Fiscal Year 2019 spending bill, or any other legislation.

We appreciate your consideration of this request and look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,



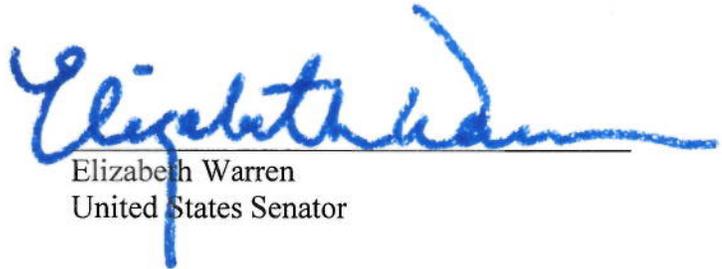
Kamala D. Harris
United States Senator



Dianne Feinstein
United States Senator



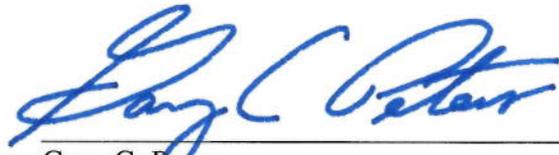
Patty Murray
United States Senator



Elizabeth Warren
United States Senator



Richard Blumenthal
United States Senator



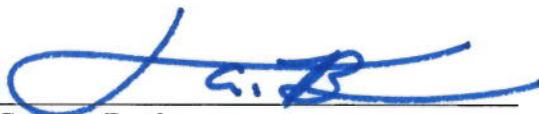
Gary C. Peters
United States Senator



Margaret Wood Hassan
United States Senator



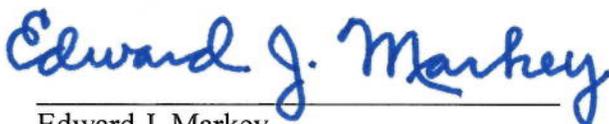
Claire McCaskill
United States Senator



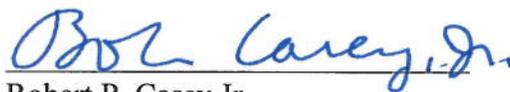
Cory A. Booker
United States Senator



Kirsten Gillibrand
United States Senator



Edward J. Markey
United States Senator



Robert P. Casey Jr.
United States Senator